



The Starvation of Gaza and the United States' Moral Responsibility

Global food security experts have expressed that the worst-case scenario of famine is currently playing out across Gaza, with mounting evidence that widespread starvation, malnutrition, and disease are propelling a huge rise in hunger-related deaths among the civilian population. This comes after humanitarian agencies have repeatedly warned of the man-made mass starvation in Gaza, largely blaming the crisis on Israel which controls the entry of all supplies into the territory. In addition to the indisputable culpability that Israeli authorities hold for the abhorrent conditions that have unfolded, others – most notably the United States government – warrant moral responsibility as well. Human rights analysts have pointed to how it is clear that Israel has only been able to carry out its starvation of Gaza because of the lack of action and enabling at the hands of the United States, and that it is primarily this that has allowed the calamity to reach the degree it has. For months, aid agencies have been pleading to be allowed to deliver food and other critical supplies that are sitting in nearby warehouses or waiting just outside of Gaza. Yet despite this, the U.S. government has failed to end its complicity in Israel's mass starvation – something that could be done if it was to compel Israel to change course in light of the enormous levels of outrage at its actions in Gaza.

As observers have outlined, to end its moral responsibility in Israel's starvation of Gaza, the United States should simply use its political leverage to force Israeli authorities to open all crossings into Gaza and allow independent and legitimate aid groups to carry out relief operations. This, combined with the United States ending its support for the universally condemned Gaza Humanitarian Foundation's (GHF) militarized aid distribution scheme, would pave the way for immediate and drastic alleviation of the dire humanitarian conditions in Gaza. The fact that the killing of hundreds of desperate aid-seeking civilians by Israeli forces at these GHF sites has not prompted the U.S. to end its support for them is deeply troubling. On top of this, the GHF scheme has forced civilians to walk miles to reach the few highly militarized and deadly sites, compared to before when impartial humanitarian agencies operated hundreds of aid distribution sites across Gaza that were accessible to those in need.

The increasingly disturbing conditions in Gaza have even recently prompted multiple leading Israeli human rights groups to voice that the country is committing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza and that other nations have a legal and moral duty to put an end to this. The reports released by the Israeli organizations detail crimes such as the intentional killing of tens of thousands of civilians, mass forced displacement and starvation, and the destruction of infrastructure that has deprived Gazans of housing, healthcare, education, and other basic rights. They also explicitly cited how Israel's allies were enabling its genocidal campaign, and that as a result, they too shared responsibility for the catastrophic suffering in Gaza. As the groups noted, namely the United States and several countries in Europe have a legal and moral obligation to take stronger action. Furthermore, the well-documented impacts of Israel's actions on Gazan civilians as well as genocidal statements from Israeli politicians and military leaders are proof of their intent, as the Israeli government is unable to claim that it was not aware of the horrific consequences of its behavior.

Due to the ever-growing evidence and acknowledgement of Israel's heinous human rights violations in Gaza, countries like the United States who possess tremendous leverage over the Israeli government have a moral and

legal imperative to act. The failure to do so, given the blatant crimes taking place in plain sight, would be a shameful abandonment of humanity.